OXFORD HOUSE TRAINING INSTITUTE

The Oxford House Training Institute will hold one-week intensive training programs in Washington, D.C. where people interested in starting Oxford Houses will learn all they need to know to establish houses in their own communities.

Participants will meet dozens of Oxford House alumni and house residents who owe their sobriety to having lived in successful houses. From these alumni and residents they will learn how Oxford Houses function at their very best. They will then be able to communicate this culture to those who start houses in their own communities and use it as a benchmark of excellence for local Oxford Houses.

Participants from around the United States will stay in Washington five days, Monday through Friday. They will be exposed during that week to classroom-type training and many on-site Oxford House visits to see the system in operation.

THE LECTURE SEGMENT

Among classroom-type training will be lectures on:

1. The history of Oxford House and how it grew as a self-supporting, self-governing network of recovery houses. Emphasis will be on the pride that house residents take in managing their own affairs and recovering together and how this pride led them to finance other Oxford Houses on their own.

2. The Oxford House Manual and what it means to Oxford House residents. The nine traditions, their value, and similarities to 12-Step program principles will be discussed. A lot of this training segment will consist of questions and answers.

3. Zoning. The single largest obstacle that many see to opening Oxford Houses is the existence of local zoning regulations and fear of legal entanglements and having the house shut down by local zoning officials. This segment of training will discuss how Oxford House avoided problems in the past. The key element of this training will be the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 and how it prevents discrimination against recovering alcoholics and drug abusers in the rental of houses. Focus will be on 1990 court agreements and suits to force compliance with the Act. The Act, in effect, preempts zoning regulations such as those governing the number of recovering people who can share a dwelling. This segment will also highlight how Oxford House avoids the need for licensing by having no formal recovery functions in the houses.

4. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 and the revolving funds it mandated to establish houses based on the Oxford House model. This segment would look at how the success of Oxford Houses led

to the recovery house amendment to the Anti-Drug Abuse Act. The act requires each state to have in place a $100,000 revolving fund to lend to four or more recovering people to pay start-up costs for Oxford Houses. Participants will learn how to apply for loans in their respective states. (Maybe visit and meet people at ADAMHA or have them come and talk to participants).

5. How to find a suitable Oxford House, lease it, and find the first residents. This segment will deal with practical elements of house location like proximity to grocery stores, banks, 12-Step program meetings and public transportation; how to approach owners of houses for leases; and locating and interviewing potential residents.

As many on-site Oxford House visits as possible will be included in the training. There is always some reluctance to believe that recovering people can manage their own houses and evict those who drink or use drugs even though Oxford House residents have been doing it for nearly 15 years. These visits will eliminate any doubt that alcoholics and drug abusers can act responsibly if given a system of collective living that works and if there are high expectations of them. The best way to achieve this end is to have participants mingle with as many Oxford House residents as possible.

ON-SITE SEGMENT

Participants will visit and witness:

1. An Oxford House weekly business meeting to see the democratic process in action and how houses deal with internal behavior and finance issues.

2. An Oxford House admissions meeting where a house interviews prospective residents and asks such questions as whether they can pay rent and how many meetings they attend weekly.

3. Operation of both men's and women's houses. While the operating systems and democratic principles are the same at both, they have different problems from time to time.

4. Operation of the Oxford House headquarters to get to know and feel comfortable with everybody on the staff.

5. See the best and worst houses physically to get a firm idea of what to look for in a house.

FOLLOW-UP

Part of the training institute program would be availability for follow-up advice on any aspect of the program as graduates go about opening houses in their respective communities.

STAFF

The Oxford House Training Institute staff will include:

The director will be John O'Neill, a co-founder of Oxford House, Inc. who has leased and participated in opening as many houses as anyone. O'Neill is a former newspaper reporter and public relations manager.

Paul Molloy, a co-founder of Oxford House who was involved in passage of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988. Molloy is a lawyer and former Congressional staff member.

Whit Holden, a co-founder of Oxford House who is an expert of zoning regulations. He is a Washington lawyer, working for the U.S. government.

John Peacock, an Oxford House alumnus who owns a small consulting firm.

Susan DiGiovani, an Oxford House alumnae who has participated in opening many Oxford Houses for women.

Friedner Whitman,.....

Etc.

FACILITIES

Participants will stay in Washington hotels. Don't know where will meet. Some place cheap and nice.

EXPENSES

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WHO WILL ATTEND

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